

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

The Status of the Claims

Claims 1-47 have been previously canceled.

48. (Currently amended) A bumper for preventing a vehicle moving in a direction toward a loading dock from contacting the loading dock or dock equipment thereat, the bumper comprising:

a first contact surface disposed to be contacted by the vehicle to stop vehicle movement toward the loading dock, the first contact surface being spaced outward from the loading dock in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement; and

a second contact surface disposed to be contacted by the vehicle to stop vehicle movement toward the loading dock at a position indicative that the vehicle is in an undesirable position relative to the loading dock, the second contact surface being spaced further outward from the loading dock than the first contact surface in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement.

49. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 48, wherein the first contact surface extends higher than the second contact surface.

50. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 48, further comprising a sensor responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to the bumper.

51. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 50, wherein the sensor is responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to the first contact surface.
52. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 50, wherein the sensor is responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to the second contact surface.
53. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 50, further comprising a light responsive to the sensor.
54. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 48, wherein the bumper is attachable to the dock face.
55. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 48, wherein the first and second contact surfaces are disposed generally perpendicular to the direction of vehicle movement.

56. (Currently amended) A bumper system for preventing a vehicle moving in a direction toward a loading dock from contacting the loading dock or dock equipment thereat, the bumper system comprising:

a first bumper and a second bumper, said bumpers being spaced laterally in a direction generally perpendicular to vehicle movement, wherein each of the first and second bumpers comprises a first contact surface disposed to be contacted by the vehicle to stop vehicle movement toward the loading dock, the first contact surface being spaced outward from the loading dock in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement, and a second contact surface disposed to be contacted by the vehicle to stop vehicle movement toward the loading dock at a position indicative that the vehicle is in an undesirable position relative to the loading dock, the second contact surface being spaced further outward from the loading dock than the first contact surface in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement.

57. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein the second contact surfaces are laterally spaced a greater distance than the first contact surfaces.

58. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein the first contact surfaces extend higher than the second contact surfaces.

59. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, further comprising a sensor responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to at least one of the bumpers.

60. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 59, wherein the sensor is responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to at least one of the first contact surfaces.

61. (Currently amended) The bumper system of claim 59, wherein the sensor is responsive to the position of the vehicle relative to at least one of the second contact ~~surface~~ surfaces.

62. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 59, further comprising a light responsive to the sensor.

63. (Previously amended) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein the lateral spacing between the second contact surfaces ~~between the second contact surface~~ creates a centered path for the vehicle.

64. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein the second contact surfaces create a visual reference that assists in keeping the vehicle generally centered relative to the loading dock.

65. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein contact of the vehicle with the second contact surface causes the vehicle to stop at a position relative to the loading dock beyond where the vehicle can be serviced by the dock equipment thereat.

66. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 56, wherein the first and second contact surfaces are disposed generally perpendicular to the direction of vehicle movement.

67. (Previously Presented) A bumper for preventing a vehicle moving in a direction toward a loading dock from contacting the loading dock or dock equipment thereat, the bumper comprising:

a first contact surface disposed to be contacted by the vehicle to stop vehicle movement toward the loading dock, the first contact surface being spaced outward from the loading dock in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement; and

a guide member for guiding a vehicle that is off-center relative to the loading dock toward a centered position in which the vehicle contacts the first contact surface.

68. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 67, wherein the guide member protrudes further from the dock face than does the first contact surface in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement.

69. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 67, wherein the first contact surface extends higher than the guide member.

70. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 67, wherein the guide member has a second contact surface that is spaced further outward from the loading dock than the first contact face in a direction opposite the direction of vehicle movement, the second contact surface being disposed to be contacted by the vehicle, such that the vehicle is passively guided to a centered position where it contacts the first contact surface by an operator of the vehicle attempting to avoid contact with the second contact surface.

71. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 67, wherein the guide member is an active guide mechanism that, when contacted by an off-center vehicle, translates the vehicle toward a centered position in which the vehicle contacts the first contact surface.

72. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 71, wherein the guide member has a second contact surface that is tapered to actively guide the vehicle toward the centered position.

73. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 71, wherein the guide member includes an anti-friction member.

74. (Previously Presented) The bumper of claim 73, wherein the anti-friction member includes a roller.

75. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 67, wherein the guide member creates a visual reference that assists in keeping the vehicle generally centered relative to the loading dock.

76. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 70, wherein contact of the vehicle with the second contact surface causes the vehicle to stop at a position relative to the loading dock beyond where the vehicle can be serviced by the dock equipment thereat.

77. (Previously Presented) The bumper system of claim 70, wherein the first and second contact surfaces are disposed generally perpendicular to the direction of vehicle movement.

78. (Currently amended) A method of preventing a vehicle parking at a loading dock from parking at an off-center position relative to the loading dock, wherein the vehicle must be within a specified distance from the loading dock to be accessible from ~~form~~ the loading dock, comprising the steps of:

providing a bumper system with a first stop position for the vehicle at a first distance outward from the loading dock, and a second stop position for the vehicle at a second, greater distance outward from the loading dock, the second distance being beyond the specified distance; and

spacing the first stop position and the second stop position laterally relative to the loading dock, so that an off-center vehicle is stopped by the bumper system at the second stop position, and a centered vehicle is stopped by the bumper system at the first stop position.